



The Evangelical Covenant
Church of Canada

113th ANNUAL REPORT





Dear ECC Delegates and Friends:

It is my pleasure and privilege, on behalf of your Leadership Board, to invite everyone in our Canadian Covenant family to the 113th Canada Conference – Annual General Meeting, hosted in Chestermere, Alberta by Lake Ridge Community Church.

“Kingdom Engagement” is our theme which rests upon Ephesians 2:10 as expressed in The Message:

“He creates each of us by Christ Jesus to join him in the work he does, the good work he has gotten ready for us to do, work we had better be doing.”

Well, it’s pretty clear, as followers and disciples of Jesus Christ, we are to be active in the pursuit of what Jesus invites us into, not only personally, but as the Canada Conference and the Evangelical Covenant Church denomination.

This urging lies at the heart of why we gather each year. Your Canada Conference (which is all of us) is heavily invested in our Ministry Priorities:

- *Make and Deepen Disciples*
- *Start and Strengthen Churches*
- *Leadership Development*
- *Love Mercy, Do Justice*

I was privileged to experience some of the fruit of this work at the ECC AGM (Gather 2016) in Phoenix, Arizona last year. Representatives of three of our church plants (Avenue Community Church, Holy Community Covenant Church & Lake Ridge Community Church) were formally welcomed into the ECC family of churches. Following this was the ordination of Marc Vandersluys and the presentation of the T.W. Anderson Award to Ray Baloun for his work with “Kernels of Hope”.

Certainly, God has been at work in our conference. Not only as described above but in many other ways, both seen and unseen. But that was last year, what about this year?

As we meet together I encourage you to listen to the Spirit, how are you being called by Jesus to “join in the work”, for the “work he has gotten ready for us”...“work we had better be doing”? Not only are you invited to this gathering of our community but you are being invited into the deeper work of Jesus in our midst. Come and be blessed.

Peace and grace,
Rich Drinovz

LEADERSHIP BOARD

Rich Drinovz	Chair	Emmanuel ECC (Surrey, BC)
Greg Pauli	Vice-Chair	College Park (Saskatoon, SK)
Keith Broad	Treasurer	Lighthouse Community (Sarnia, ON)
Linea Lanoie	Secretary	Gateway ECC (Prince Albert, SK)
Jenell Plum	ECC Liaison	Malmö Mission CC (Malmö, AB)
Jess Lefebvre	Member at Large	Kensington Commons (Calgary, AB)
Lavern Arndt	Member at Large	Lighthouse Community (Sarnia, ON)
Terence Barg	Member at Large	Faith Covenant Church (Breton, AB)



The Evangelical Covenant Church

Grace and peace to you as you gather in the bond of Christ.

Three Strand Strong. This biblical image comes from the book of Ecclesiastes, which declares that 'a cord of three strands is not easily broken.' That's our partnership defined at its core: the local congregation, the conference, and the denomination working together.

We, as a cord of three strands, work to accomplish God's mission in our communities, in our conferences, and around the world. We base our work around our five mission priorities. Together, we start and strengthen churches, make and deepen disciples, develop leaders, love mercy and do justice, and serve globally. This mission is only possible because of the combined efforts of the congregations in your region, together with the over 850 churches that make up the ECC today in the United States and Canada.

Be sure to watch for the new Strand Strong video being shown at this Annual Meeting. It's an inspiring look at the compelling Kingdom impact through our combined efforts. Because of our strong partnership in our shared mission, we accomplish much. We invite you to visit www.CovChurch.org for information, stories, videos, and resources on all that is happening with the ministries and initiatives of the Covenant all around the world.

In addition to your conference annual meeting, we'd love to have you join with hundreds of other Covenanters June 22-24 in Detroit, Michigan for **Gather 2017**, the Evangelical Covenant Church's annual business meeting. The annual meeting of the Ministerium will take place just before Gather. Once again, the Detroit Metro churches are hosting Impact Detroit, a powerful time of workshops and hands-on experiences that will impact the city of Detroit as well as each delegate who participates.

I am grateful to serve this movement in partnership with people like you. With God's help, may we remain *Three Strand Strong* in our shared mission and ministry.

In It Together,

Gary B. Walter,
President

PASTOR TRANSITIONS

Elena & Patrick Franklin	began ministry as Church Plant Pastors in South Eastern Manitoba
Bobbi Salkeld	began ministry at Kensington Commons (Calgary, AB), Pastor
Dana Sproule	began ministry at Erickson ECC, Associate Pastor
Scott Wall	began ministry at Kensington Commons (Calgary, AB), Church Plant Pastor

"And the one sitting on the throne said, 'Look, I am making all things new!' And then he said to me, 'Write this down, for what I tell you is trustworthy and true.'" Revelation 21:5

As I write this report the present environment of Winnipeg seems to portray a close parallel to what I see in the Evangelical Covenant Church of Canada; the tough days of winter are over, the thaw is beginning, and the days of spring are not far off. In the verse quoted above I notice two critical issues as we reflect on the good things that are happening across the Canada Covenant:

- *God is the one at work – "I am making all things new!"*
- *We ought to expect his work – "...what I tell you is trustworthy and true."*

The above was part of my 1998 Annual Report following my first full year in this position. Many changes have taken place since I began as Acting Superintendent/President in August of 1997 but through all the changes God is the constant. We seek to affirm in our action the belief that Jesus is "the same yesterday, today and forever." This is the bedrock of our purpose and hope.

The year 2016 was one of continued development. If I can stretch things somewhat I would point to the framework given by Ron Rohlheiser (Saskatchewan boy who went on to the priesthood and now leads a School of Theology in Texas) on discipleship as a window into our common work:

Essential Discipleship is getting our lives and values together. We stand on the shoulders of many who have grounded the values and affirmation of the Covenant. Our corporate essential discipleship is in place.

Generative Discipleship moves us to thinking about how we can live to make an impact on our world. We continue to "grow up" as a community of churches. We continue to struggle to realize that our identity as "an insignificant group of around 30 ministries" cannot be an excuse to inaction.

Radical Discipleship is the final stage where we discover how we can bring optimal blessing to others. In Rohlheiser this stage deals with death and the ECCC is far from death. At the same time we must realize that we do experience 'death' including changes in approach of ministries, changes in the settings of ministries and changes in the leadership of ministries. Because our Christian faith links death with resurrection these are all opportunities for true encouragement and blessing.

In reviewing the past year I would make the following observations that may form the leadership challenges of the upcoming year:

- The pursuit of Kingdom Engagement will require greater resources. By this I do not necessarily mean greater financial resourcing but rather greater leadership resourcing necessary to find new ways to engage and expand without always needing to expand our fundraising.
- Investing in leadership is absolutely necessary for the future of the ECCC.
- More creative forms of communication and networking within the ECCC family is essential if we are to continually bridge the vast geography of not only of our country but also with our international partners.
- The culture of the day demands that we think both pastorally and prophetically. This is not about being merely relevant but rather about revealing the good news of the Gospel that has been given to us.

I conclude this report with great appreciation to the grace shown to me over the years by this family of churches. I am grateful for the Leadership Board and especially to Rich Drinovz and Linea Lanoi who complete terms as Chair and Secretary respectively! Thanks to the outstanding pastors and leaders who serve. Thanks to Hanne, Monica, Glenn and Sally for their gifts and commitment to making the ECCC work. Finally, thanks to Darlene for her advice (sometimes unsolicited but always wise) and her willingness to allow me to live into this role in ways that have often not been easy.

2016 was one of the richest years in ministry that I can remember. I moved into the year with three priorities:

- 1. Strengthen support for discipleship initiatives within our church.**
- 2. Invest in our facility in order to facilitate mission.**
- 3. Ministry Experimentation.**

I'm happy to report that significant steps were taken in all of these areas, and there is good fruit emerging from these emphases. Some highlights include:

- We have journeyed through half of Mark's gospel, emphasizing key themes of discipleship to Jesus, the kingdom of God, and the gospel throughout.
- We celebrated two baptisms last summer, and I've had many conversations with people who speak of a revitalization of their faith and desire to serve Christ.
- Our small groups continue to be a place where people find meaningful ways to grow and serve. One small group spearheaded a pre-Christmas campaign that helped provide over 250 pairs of winter-weight socks for Nelson Cares Community Connect Day!
- We held a fantastic Guess Who's Coming to Dinner Event last spring.
- Our "Jesus and Buddha: Two Paths or One?" public talk was attended by over 60 people last spring, many of whom were not a part of our church community.
- We formed a Missions Committee to help facilitate greater involvement in local and global missions.
- Over 15 discipleship seminars/workshops were offered the course of the year that covered topics from journaling to religious art studies.
- We have strengthened our Sunday School program and have been excited to have more children and teachers involved!

Overall, I believe our church is in a very exciting place. We continue to grow both numerically and spiritually, and there is a building excitement over where God is leading us. There is a building anticipation about the future that is difficult to put into words, but is incredibly exciting as people are stepping out in faith—in ways big and small—and experiencing the joy and power of serving Jesus and their neighbours.

We look forward to 2017 being a year where more people discover new life in Christ, are strengthened in their desire to love and serve him, and move into our community and the world to bring Jesus' light and love to bear on the darkness around us.

Jeff Strong, Pastor

It was along the north shore of the Sea of Galilee that Jesus spent most of his active ministry years. Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida were towns straddling the space between Jews and Gentiles, places where Jesus gave his Sermon on the Mount and alerted a hurting world to the goodness of his Father.

Chestermere sits along the shores of another lake - one very much loved by Jesus, too. Our neighbourhoods of the Cove, Rainbow Falls, Westmere, Kinniburgh, and others are home to nearly every ethnicity, culture, and religion. So we take our lead from Jesus and we are learning to love our place with love, joy, and hope.

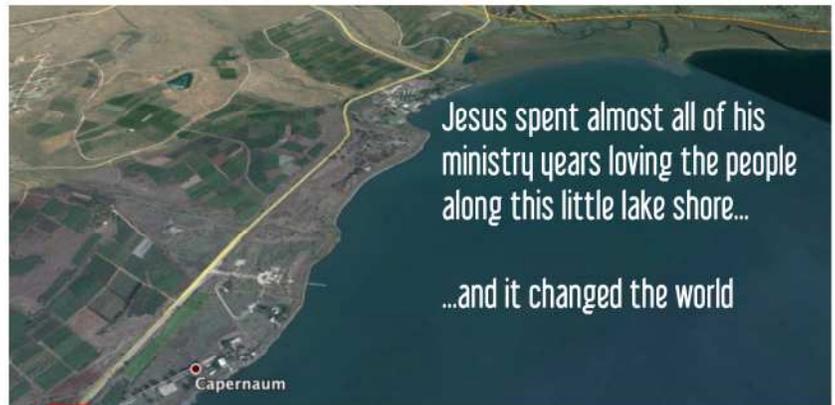
This past year we continued or built upon many projects. Our Annual Soap Box Derby grew in scope and impact as we built and raced new cars, bringing families and neighbours together. Our children's ministry grew with several new key leaders, a renewed vision, and a growing crew of awesome kids with great ideas to share with the whole community. This past year we also started developing our youth ministry in new ways including a Sunday morning group and other community events. Our Mighty Neighbourly program has now welcomed hundreds to our city and last year we were a sponsor of some of the 38 block parties in our city.

Lake Ridge has become a partner in a new community project that will benefit youth in our city. Our new offices are now in the Centre for Community Leadership, a non-profit incubator facility that was just built beside our skate board park and new community gardens. We think it's so fitting for us to share this space and further connect with families and teenagers in our city. We look forward to what this means!

This year saw a fresh focus on engaging the story of God and learning to reflect on our own stories. Small groups, courses, resources, and sermon series helped us engage and grow together. Since the start, hospitality has been a big part of our journey as a community - we like to eat together. We're exploring what that means on Sunday mornings and this year we changed up our format, allowing for a coffee break in the middle of our worship service - it's another opportunity to connect with others and embrace the growing community that God is shaping. We continue to explore options for ministry in Haiti and we're grateful for the doors God is opening for us.

Jesus loves Chestermere and it is from along these shores that Jesus is calling a new community of disciples to follow him into blessing our world. Thank you for praying for Lake Ridge Community Church!

Preston Pouteaux, Pastor



The last two years for Blackstrap Covenant in Dundurn, SK has been a time of change. Steve Menshen-friend, who helped to plant the church, resigned as pastor and has moved on to other ministry work. We are truly thankful for the work that he did, in partnership with others, to help establish the church. In February 2016, Andrew Gilkinson and his family began ministry at the church. God has been gracious and faithful to the church throughout the transition.

As a church, this new season has helped us rediscover our joy in the gospel and our love for Scripture. Together, we have gone through the Community Bible Experience and have had terrific discussions that have allowed some to discover a deeper love and appreciation for Scripture. We have also introduced new traditions like our Maundy Thursday service and an outdoor church service. The church has also begun a new confirmation class with our youth so that they can explore Scripture.

This season has also been a time for people to take new steps in their faith. For one family, this has meant returning to church for the first time in years. For another family, it has meant finding a new church home as newcomers to our community. For some, it has meant putting their faith in Jesus Christ. For others, it has meant answering the call to be baptized. For all of us, it has been an invitation to answer Jesus' call to follow him into the life of the kingdom (Mark 1:14-20).

While we continue to be a smaller church, we realize that there is still a great need for those in the community to know the love of Jesus. We invite you to pray with us that we would follow through with our mission as a church--"To know Jesus Christ and to make him known."

In Christ,
Andy Gilkinson, Pastor
Mark Anderson, Chair

Ps 107:1 **"Give thanks** to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever."

The Minnedosa Covenant Church underwent some big changes in 2016 with it being the first full year with both a new senior pastor and a new youth pastor on board. As both of them have gotten settled into their new positions there has been a sense of stability and renewal in the church. The past few years might be likened to the times when a ship returns to port to get resupplied, repaired and ready to set sail again with some new crew members. The church is at sea again and ready to catch the wind the Holy Spirit blows.

Of the many good things that have happened in 2016, three stand out as significant blessings that God has bestowed upon us this year. The first was a visit from Teen Challenge. What was remarkable about this is how it came about and how it touched people very deeply. After recognizing that we were not really very knowledgeable or equipped to deal with people who might come from our community with difficult issues like alcoholism or chemical dependency we began to pray about it. The first day we prayed we received a phone call from Teen Challenge looking for churches to connect with. During their visit some of our people's hearts were touched very deeply and relationships formed that continue to be a blessing even today. We have a lot to learn but God has started something that will help us to bring Christ to our community.

Along similar lines, another significant development occurred. The local Farmer's Market asked if they might be able to relocate to our parking lot for their weekly sale. The congregation was happy to be asked and enthusiastically embraced the community venture. We even got to participate by running a barbecue each week. We decided to have all proceeds from the barbecue sales go back to the community instead of to the church and so we chose several community organizations to give to. What a pleasure it was to be handing the local nonprofit organizations a check from the church in the name of Jesus with a note of thanks and encouragement for their work in helping make Minnedosa a better place to live. What a gift from God this has been as we seek to build bridges and be a blessing in the community.

The third significant blessing this year has been the addition of some new people who have added a great deal to our worship through the use of their gifts in music and storytelling. We added a children's story to the service once again and many different people have shared with the children. There is great joy each week to see little ones enthusiastically run to the front of the church for their special time and then run out again for Junior Church. It is life giving and often the highlight of the morning. Smiles, laughter, inspiring music and Biblical preaching have been wind in the sails.

God was exceedingly kind to MECC in 2016, and that makes us very excited about 2017.

Jeff Loewen, Pastor

RAINY RIVER ECC

RAINY RIVER, ON

On behalf of the congregation in Rainy River it is a great privilege to be part of the Covenant family of churches. Thank you for your prayers and support as the local church here desires to see our community and district place their faith in Jesus. Reflecting on 2016, God continued to reveal to His people His faithfulness, love, mercy and grace and our church rests in the promises of God. One sermon series this past year from Jude reminded us that it is the Gospel that saves us, sanctifies us and preserves us until that day. This benediction follows an exhortation to keep the purity of the Gospel in the church and to be aware of those who seek to deceive the believers.

The last part of June we had close to 25 children and youth during our week-long Vacation Bible School and many of these children began attending our Sunday School in September of 2016. We are grateful for the many who attend our discipleship ministries, both on Sunday morning and Wednesday evenings as well as various occasions throughout the year. We are equally thankful for the opportunity to serve our community through various events held here at the church which includes funerals and weddings.

Throughout 2016 the Lord directed various committees to formulate some policies to assist in the future governing of the church. We are so grateful for the many men and women, youth and children in our midst who continually live out the one another's of Scripture and seek to be faithful to God's calling on their lives.

We continue through 2017 with great anticipation of what God is going to accomplish through His people here in Rainy River and are continually reminded of these words penned by the Apostle Paul to the church at Ephesus, "Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen."

Kors Pater, Pastor

STOP. Before you read another word of this report, ask yourself, *where have I seen God starting something new in the Evangelical Covenant Church in the last 5 years?* What have you seen? What do you know? What have you heard?



In the last year, we saw our first wave of projects, Lake Ridge, Avenue, and Holy Community officially join the ECC and continue to be a blessing to their communities and neighbours. We've seen Commons Church in Calgary launch new services and prepare to plant another parish in the city. We've seen the Keener family in Montreal continue to be blessed by strategic partnerships and opportunities to plant the Church within the diverse, urban, secular environment they live in. We've seen fresh opportunities open up in the Greater Toronto Area as Abundant Life Covenant begins to grow and develop. In addition to these projects we celebrate: our new connections with the Evangelical Fellowship Church and City Church for All Nations in Edmonton; the ongoing mission and ministry of "The Gate" in Prince Albert; the launch of a new service in Creston; growing connections and partnerships between ECCC priorities and non-ECCC churches. There is a lot of movement and growth happening within and among us! Let's give thanks.

Our most recent recommended church planters, Elena and Patrick Franklin and their growing community in Steinbach, MB highlight how God has and is at work. They highlight the movement of the Covenant back to Winnipeg in the early 90s, the growth of Faith Covenant, the planting of Holy Community, and now this new interconnected development. It evokes the prophet Isaiah's words to Israel, "Do you not know? Have you not heard?"... God is at work, he doesn't grow tired... he invites us into that work.

As Director of Church Planting, I am thankful for and continue to pray for growing partnership between established churches and new initiatives. I am thankful for the support of the ECCC staff and Leadership. In this season of transition, I cannot say enough for Jeff Anderson's encouragement, faithfulness, and vision for a growing movement of churches across Canada. I am also grateful for the support and encouragement of denominational staff, Hope Community Covenant Church (where I also serve as lead pastor), and the consistent support and encouragement of my family (Bekah, Ella, Soren, Jonas, and Greta).

Jesus says in Matthew 13... the Kingdom of God is like a mustard seed. It's small, but it grows. This story of intent describes in real time what is going on amongst us. What have you seen? What do you know? What have you heard? STOP and look. You'll be glad you did.



Commons Church has seen consistent and encouraging growth since starting in 2014, and we thank God for this! Perhaps the most promising aspect of that increase has been that we regularly see people discovering and reconnecting with Jesus in new ways. We long to be a honest and passionate community, and we're inspired by how lives and relationships are being changed as we tell His story.

Since the onset, one of our stated goals has been to become a network of interconnected parishes deeply connected to Calgary's urban core. The community's leadership thought that it might take several years to reach a point where that dream could be realized, but the realities of our growth and development have accelerated the process.

And that is why, in late 2015, the leadership team began considering Scott and Darlene Wall as potential team members to help launch a second parish. They were approved and affirmed in collaboration with the Evangelical Covenant's Church Planting initiative, and moved from Ontario in September of 2016.

Since their arrival, plans have begun in earnest for launching in early 2018. A series of dinner parties were held in which current Commons participants discussed future plans and learned about how to get involved as part of the core team. Those gatherings revealed a keen sense of support throughout the entire community for the project, and a small group of committed individuals emerged to help spearhead the process. Over the past couple of months, this group has scoured Calgary's central neighbourhoods in search of a location. While no final launch site has been confirmed just yet, excitement is building as the team discerns where to land. Our city is experiencing significant economic challenges that impact many individuals and families, and we are thrilled to be part of how Jesus brings life, hope, and newness to the world.

Pray for us as we lean into this next phase as a community!



THE GATHERING COVENANT CHURCH PLANT SE MANITOBA

We held in our hearts a desire for intentional community, attentive worship and engaged theology. We wanted to faithfully attend and participate in church. And we wanted to “do and be” church, together. We wanted to see people get to know and love Jesus, and to know how deeply they are loved by him: To see lives transformed, and to live out of the truth and freedom that comes from being firmly rooted in Christ. To be a people who can lean on God together, and embrace with joy, the tension of living fully in the “already and not yet”. To become a people who seek to follow Jesus with the whole of their lives, together. God was growing in our hearts a desire to plant a church in SE Manitoba.

This desire was nurtured and grown by God for a few years as Patrick and I got to know the ECCC through Jeff Anderson, and the pastors at Faith Community Church and Holy Community in Winnipeg. As they welcomed us, we were introduced to more people of the ECCC. In his role as professor of Theology and Ethics at Providence Seminary, Patrick had opportunity to teach ECCC members and pastors. Our hearts grew in fondness and we felt God’s further prompting. We took a step to formalize what God had been doing in our lives by beginning a small group ministry of the Covenant in SE Manitoba. We had no idea who would attend! We decided to begin with the two of us. We prayed God would bring people along who did not attend church, did not have a church home or were otherwise in transition. Within a week, God brought about a conversation with a friend who shared their need to find a church community, and who shared our hearts desire.

Shortly thereafter, we connected with a family we had met briefly in the weeks prior and thought to tell them about what God was doing in our lives. They said yes to our invitation to begin a small group as it was clear God had been working in all our lives in similar fashion. Together, the five of us met in our home. Then seven adults were present. Then, including children, we were 20. After a few weeks of meeting on Sunday afternoons, all people who for various reasons did not have a home church, we acknowledged what God was doing and moved to Sunday morning. He had gathered a body, a people, his church. A year later, we are 30 people meeting faithfully, growing in love for God and one another.

Please join us. Please pray as we gather and seek the face of Jesus. Pray for SE Manitoba. Pray for resources, for provision of space to meet as we have outgrown our house, and that God grants us wisdom as we discern next steps.

Elena and Patrick Franklin



In a section concerning his ministry to the Gentiles, Paul says in Romans 15, "It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation. Rather, as it is written: *'Those who were not told about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand.'*"

We have often articulated our sense of call by, "planting Jesus where he is not known and planting the church where it is not growing." This led us to Quebec with the ECCC. Our initial mission was primarily *'research and development,'* and we articulated this through five activities: (1) On the ground **discernment**, (2) **networking**, (3) gaining **experience** in the context, (4) being a **pastoral presence** in our neighborhood, and (5) being a **Covenant presence** in Quebec.

Over the last two and a half years we have seen this approach pay off in many ways, from a life-giving partnership with St-Peter's Anglican church (our surrogate Covenant church here), to coaching other churches in Congregational Vitality, as well as encouraging and coaching an existing church plant in our town.

We have also had several firsts in the last 12-18 months. We saw first wave of Covenant volunteers who helped run a junior Camp in August. Tim traveled to France to participate in a Congregational Vitality workshop as an ECCC pastor who speaks French. In November Tim provide our first Covenant sponsored Congregational Vitality workshop in French in Quebec. Additionally, we have brought two pastors from Quebec to our Covenant Midwinter gathering in the US, and we have networked widely as spokespeople for the ECCC. We are SO very thankful for the prayers, relational support, and financial generosity of our ECCC family.

All our activities have contributed to our desire to **Start & Strengthen** the church in Quebec. We pray for new communities of faith as well as existing (and often struggling) churches to be renewed in Quebec. Our vision is no smaller than **to see Christianity resurrected in Quebec through faithful belief and relevant practice!**

We are spending a lot of our time lately discerning next steps for ministry here. It is quite different attempting to bring our Covenant identity and practice to a province with no other Covenant churches or even Covenant people! How can God uniquely use the Covenant to awaken the church in Quebec? How can we use our distinct identify as missional pietist to promote new healthy and missional communities of faith here? Please pray for our discernment and that we can establish and sustain a fruitful structure in eastern Canada for future ministry to grow on!

Tim, Di, Eli, Ethan, Ezekiel, and Noah Keener



Triennial was a time long looked forward to, planned for, prayed for. And then, for some of us, it began even before we got to Kansas City. For the first time our Conference was able to host two international guests, thanks to the generosity of the Great Lakes Conference south of the Ontario border. Lighthouse and Avenue had the joy of meeting Edith Moncaleano Moor, WM president, and Katie Isaza, Missionary, from Colombia, S.A. (Edith's Interpreter).

Nineteen women from our Conference joined in with close to 900 women, thirteen received a scholarship with help from Trellis. We worshipped, listened to amazing, challenging speakers, and heard the stories of women from many countries and backgrounds. Our heart was enlarged, our inmost thirst quenched as our own heart with what we heard and saw, that in Christ we experience the same joys, the same victories, and that his strength and presence accompany us in every season of life.

We enjoyed meeting our SIMs (Missionaries) Letha Kerl and Kelly Prudek, shared lots of laughter and good food, and prayed together. It was so exciting to see each other face to face, for some for the first time. Caroline Giresi from Lighthouse was invited to share her retreat experience from the stage. Linea Lanoi came on our invitation to be the spiritual director for our women. Dave's ride made lifted the financial burden for Sharon Nethagany and Di Keener to attend, a great joy to all. I trust the quotes from the women that follow will touch your heart as you see how unique and beautiful God's gracious, loving touch made the experience for each of us.

Triennial XVI is planned for July 2019 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Pastors and leaders, please consider that your support, encouragement, and making it a priority to assist women in your churches to attend this event could and will make a significant impact.

Trudy McIntosh



UPCOMING EVENTS

113th Annual General Meeting	May 4-7, 2017
Israel/Palestine Study Tour	June 7-17, 2017 (registration is full)
Adventures in Leadership	August 8-15, 2017
Youth Ministry Conference	Sept. 29-Oct. 1, 2017
Pastor/Spouse Retreat	Oct. 2-4, 2017
Alive	Oct. 20-22, 2017
CHIC	July 15-20, 2018

I first participated in ALL as a student in the summer of 2013 and now this past summer I had the unique opportunity to come back and be a part of this program once again, this time as a leader. Each time I have gone on this trip, I have come back with new insights and ponderings on the topic of leadership, as well as a lot of new friendships and some interesting, often hilarious, stories. From bonding around the lack of real bathroom facilities, to learning how to cook over a camp stove, to sharing a devotion with the group, ALL is full of experiences that push you out of your comfort zone but also help to show you your potential.



One of its unique strengths is the way that ALL allows youth from Covenant Churches across the country to come together and realize their leadership potential. This is important because our youth are not just our future church, they are a part of our church today. So we need to encourage them and let them know that they are valued and that we want to help them to grow and become involved in our churches in various capacities. ALL is a way, not only to train young leaders, but also to let them know that they are a part of our church family.

This past summer we had 6 students participate in the trip. It was exciting to see each of them take a turn leading the group and facing different challenges, whether that was in the area of navigating or in the leading of a devotional time. Being able to see the unique strengths and that each person brought to the table and also see the way that they each were searching after God within their own lives was really cool. I know that, as a leader, I came away from the trip feeling encouraged and I hope that the students and other leaders went away with that same feeling as well!

Heidi Frei



This past year has been a good in terms of reconnecting and establishing a plan moving forward with our partners in Haiti. Two different churches took trips and plans have been made for a few other churches to visit in the next year. These trips continue to serve as opportunities for our Canadian people to grow in their faith, as well as, understand the unique challenges our sisters and brothers face everyday.

It has been encouraging to see the results of our financial investments grow. The resources we provide are vitally important to the overall health of many individuals in Haiti. Currently, the ECCC has committed to partner in the following ways:

The Serepta Program: is a food program for elderly people in Haute Limbe. Each month, food is given to approximately 95 elderly people. The food supplies their needs for the entire month. Without this care, it is difficult to see how some of these individuals would survive.

Petite Anse: is an area in Cap Haitian known as a slum. It is difficult to describe other than to say it's difficult to imagine living there. The ECCC in partnership with College Park Covenant Church and a team in Haiti provide a rice and beans meal twice a week for approximately 160 children.

Sante 2000 (Health 2000): is a clinic run by Dr. Manno and specializes in diabetic care. Diabetes in Haiti is a growing epidemic and can often-mean death as finding the proper care and Insulin is extremely difficult. Sante 2000 has grown from 60 patients to over 300 patients in the last 3 years. With the financial help of the ECCC, Dr. Manno and his staff care for people within a 1-2 hour drive of Haute Limbe.

New project: fish farming is a new possibility is on the horizon. Lake Ridge Community Church has been exploring the opportunity to partner with Randy Bevis of ECC Serve Globally to teach and train farmers to produce fish as a sustainable source of food and income. Stay tuned!

We are excited about the doorways God appears to be creating for continued relationships in Haiti. These opportunities could not happen without the ongoing financial support of local ECCC churches. I would personally like to encourage all of us to remember these needs when setting our church budgets as well as fundraisers in this next year. If you would like to learn more or plan a trip please let us know and we will provide assistance with setting it up.

Respectfully submitted by
Pastor Evan Dewald, Lake Ridge Community Church





We continue to partner with the Evangelical Covenant church of Ecuador by continuing to build relationships with the churches and work alongside with The Santiago Partnership.

Last year our trip was more of mission's trip where we gathered 6 individuals from 4 different Canadian Covenant churches and headed down to Ecuador to work alongside with The Santiago Partnership. We continue to see the fruit of that trip in both the individuals that shared the experience and the work we partnered with in Ecuador. An update on the Clinic and the Home for At Risk Children can be found on The Santiago Partnership website. <https://www.santiagopartnership.org>



The clinic has been opened and running now for months with dentists and a nurse in place. The Home for at Risk Children is close to being opened with only one permit to go. The exciting news in regards to the home is that there are potentially self-sustaining crops growing that will help fund the home! You can read about it more in Joel and Kim's newsletter.



This is part of what they wrote:

"As you may know, we purchased property at the beginning of the project's establishment in order to work on self-sustainability. The land that is located just above the Home for At Risk Children is being used to cultivate crops that can be sold for a profit that goes back into paying for the project's expenses. Most recently we had our best crops yet."



This year our 2017 trip which is happening end of April will look a bit different. Our intention for this year's trip is a vision trip. We have invited a few pastors to join us as we plan to gather at the annual Pastors conference in Ecuador. Our hope and desire is to support one another and learn from each other at the same time we also hope to stir excitement and interest in many of the Canadian Covenant Churches to join in on the work that is being done in Ecuador.



Next year we plan to lead a mission's trip once again and look forward to the opportunity of gathering families to participate in this amazing experience. We encourage you to start praying about joining us.

Thank you for your prayers and support in this very important partnership that we have the opportunity to serve in. It is exciting to see relationships build and continue as we walk together, Covenant Partners in Jesus' Kingdom.

Natasha Westerhoud and Arden Gustafson

The ECCC has had an ongoing relationship with the Holy Land going back almost ten years. Along with World Vision Sponsorships in the Jenin Area (northern West Bank/Palestine) we have been seeking to develop greater understanding around the Christian Church in the region. This understanding is augmented by two specific events: The Israel/Palestine Study Tour which takes place on odd years (leaving June 7, 2017) and the Christ At The Checkpoint Conference that happens on even years. Last March a small group from the ECCC attended the Conference and Shelby shares her experience of time in the Holy Land.

In March of 2016 I had the opportunity to travel to Israel & Palestine with a group from ECCC. The trip included touring key biblical sites in Israel, meeting with Palestinian Christians to learn about their work in the region, and then travelling to Bethlehem to attend a Christ at the Checkpoint conference. Prior to the trip I was excited by the idea of visiting historical sites to learn more about the life and times of Jesus. While visiting the scenes from Bible stories was an unforgettable experience, what I found truly transformative were the people we met along the way. Like many Westerners, I had misconceptions about Palestinians and the ongoing conflict in the region. Experiencing the daily difficulties that are a constant for Palestinians opened my eyes to the suffering that has become reality for them. To witness them smile in the face of adversity and maintain hope despite their struggle spoke to the resiliency of the human spirit. To discover that there are Palestinian Christians doing meaningful work towards peace and reconciliation amidst unresolved political tension was inspiring. Meeting the staff at World Vision in Jenin and having the opportunity to visit with a family participating in one of their projects provided an education about the importance of international aid in the area. The trip ended following an informative conference which addressed the issue of religious extremism and provided ways that we, as Christians, can tackle this problem. One year later I continue to reflect frequently on my time in Israel & Palestine. The people that I met there and the experiences that we shared helped to shape a new outlook on what it means to love my neighbour. It was an experience I will never forget.— Shelby Dwyer

Covenant Kids Congo/Powered by World Vision is a multi-year partnership between the Evangelical Covenant Church and World Vision USA & Canada. Partnering with the wider ECC and also with World Vision there is a focused impact that has brought about significant positive change to one of the poorest countries on earth.

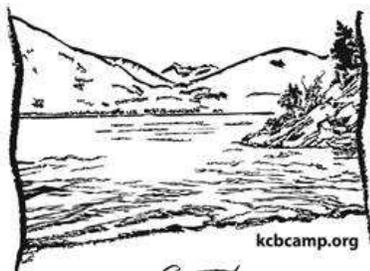
Below is a listing of 2016 statistics; please read real lives into these numbers!

- 575 Households with malnourished children supported with agricultural tools and assorted seeds for home gardening
- 484 Malnourished children supported with care and food in nutrition centers
- 255 Orphans and vulnerable children supported with health care
- 78,225 Children immunized due to Extended Program for Immunization and an adequate means to refrigerate vaccines for prolonged storage and during transport
- 16,589 Schoolchildren and teachers trained in improved sanitation and hygiene practices
- 350 Small farmers trained in new techniques and provided with seeds and tools
- 1,398 Farmers trained on the importance of balanced diet
- 150 Households supported to start home gardens
- 49 Women supported with inputs to start small businesses
- 202 Children attending Bible camps

We are all connected. Our food is something that we often take for granted. That connection from the field to the plate is multiplied so many times in our Kernels of Hope Project. We are so blessed in this country and we once again shared those blessings with people in need of North Kivu in the Congo. The connections on this project include the real farmer producing the crop and the virtual farmers paying the expenses and ECCC and World Relief Canada working through the Canadian Foodgrains Bank with the government of Canada multiplying all the funds and connecting to church based organizations in the Congo to connect to the farmers so they can produce better crops and a better living for them and their families. The best connector in all of this is our God who cares equally for every person in the circle! This year about \$300,000 was made available. We are abundantly blessed. Thanks to all who could help in 2016 and please Grow with us in 2017!



“Ray the Grain Guy”



Those of us that have been in the faith for a long time, sometimes wonder “what is it that I can do that will make a difference for the Kingdom?” or “Is what I’m doing now, making a difference?”. It’s good to ask that from time to time. We may not always have an answer but it does make us realize that we are not truly effective if we don’t seek out where God is leading us. It’s not about us, is it?

This western world of ours is not all that receptive to Christianity and Jesus and in fact most minds are made up on how they view God and his kingdom by the age of 18. So what do we, as committed Christians, do with that fact and how can we be effective for Christ in this Western world?

Children and youth are becoming so very important for the growth of love for Jesus and his Kingdom on earth, and even more so in this Western World of ours. Our **Camp Ministry Team** for **Kootenay Covenant Bible Camp** is committed to providing a week of Christ centered living for 44 campers from the age of 7 to 12. A week full of Bible stories, Christian passion, love and fun that will hopefully impact those young lives to consider a life full with Jesus. Campers ages 7 to 12 are what we believe we have been called to share the good news with. It takes over 20 youth and adults to give 24hrs a day for 6 straight days this year to provide this environment for a full camp. This is a ministry that impacts those 44 campers in life changing ways. We'll never really know how impactful it is on their years of life to come but be sure, it's all but good.

Praise and prayer items:

Praise- for our youth and adult volunteers

Prayer- for their example and strength to impact the campers for Christ

Praise- for a wonderful camp facility that we rent

Prayer- for safety and protection for all campers and staff

Praise- for Pastor Jeff Strong and his messages from the Lord for our campers

Prayer- that Pastor Jeff will be led by the Holy Spirit in speaking to the hearts of campers

Praise- for a full camp and campers that are excited about being at camp

Prayer- that lives of our campers will be changed forever and decisions made to follow Christ.

Thank you for your prayers and support,
Rick Dickieson, CMT Chair

COVENANT BAY BIBLE CAMP

PIGEON LAKE, AB



It is with an incredible amount of joy and excitement that I write this today. Not only do we get to be with Christ everyday but we get to show the world the "goodness of God"! What an incredible opportunity!

But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.

1 Peter 2:9

Covenant Bay has seen continued success in the programs offered. In 2016 we offered an additional week of camp called Gush Camp for grades 2-6. Our overnight youth camps and family camps saw a small increase in attendance and we had a decrease in our Day Camp numbers. God continues to save, heal and encourage campers. It is exciting to watch Him work!

Covenant Bay continues press onward toward construction of a new Accommodations Lodge. We praise God for \$240,000 that was donated toward this project in 2016. Thank you to everyone who has given so generously. Construction on the Accommodation Lodge will begin this fall pending development permits. Pray that God will continue to provide all that is needed.

This new building should not be confused with ministry. Ministry happens by God within the hearts of people. The Accommodations Lodge will be one more tool that can be used to aid in ministry.

Covenant Bay is here to assist the Church in it's efforts. We would love to partner with you to help you accomplish your mission. Contact us at 780-586-2828 or jon@covenantbay.ca to begin a conversation.

We are so pleased to be partnering with the ECCC in regards to Adventures in Leadership and a brand new initiative called Youth Ministry Conference. Both of these programs help develop leaders within the ECCC. You can visit the conference website for more details!

Jon Drebert - Executive Director

COVENANT HEIGHTS BIBLE CAMP

CLEAR LAKE, MB

Ephesians 3:16-19

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸ may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.



Growing, Rooted in Love.

In this upcoming season of camp we have chosen the theme of *Growing, Rooted in Love* as our compass needle to point us towards Christ and the Love that is extended to us and into which we are called to grow. We are continually amazed and humbled by the way God uses a place like Camp to work in the lives of kids and volunteers that come out every summer. We've had some great growth at camp in the past few years - more campers and volunteers. Things are moving in a good direction that looks like vitality and fruitfulness.

This past year through a lot of generous donations of time, money and resources we were able to reside the chapel and put on a new roof along with many other improvements to facilities. Our "New Heights" fund raising campaign continues to move ahead as we improve the facilities at Covenant Heights for many more years of exciting ministry together.

We have also been thankful to see so many young new leaders eager to serve and step into roles of service and ministry at camp. Three seasons ago, with support from the Trellis Foundation, we began a student leadership development program at CHBC called "Branch" (based on John 15, the vine and the branches). We have seen this program grow and develop into something that will have impact for years to come, and we are actively continuing to develop and improve on it.

We are excited for the season of ministry ahead, and all the new growth God has in store for and as always, hopeful for the ways in which God will be known even more in this next season.

Matt Hardy, Director
Hanne Johnson, Camp Coordinator
Gavin Jensen, Chair

This was my first year as the new coordinator for Women's Ministries and also the first year for our new team in Canada. It has been a year in which we have spent many hours in prayer and conversation, seeking the direction in which God wants us to go. We are excited as a team to serve the women of this conference and for God to continue to use this great ministry to further His kingdom.

Here is our team:

Stacey Lees: I am Stacey Lees and this is my third year on the team but my first as the coordinator. I attend Malmo Mission Covenant Church in Wetaskiwin, AB have been married to my husband Pat for 4 years. We have a 2 year old son named Brenden and are expecting baby number 2 at the of May.

Deborah Coutts-Smith: I am new on the national WM team and am the secretary for our team. I attend Lighthouse Community Church in Sarnia, ON. where I also serve on the WM team. I have 4 grown sons and 3 adorable grandchildren and aside from family, my passions are in the areas of justice and reconciliation.

Di Keener: Bonjour! Je m'appelle Diana Keener. J'habite a Montreal avec mes 4 garçons et mon mari qui s'appelle Tim Keener. We have enjoyed living here and immersing ourselves in the culture. The kids have done very well adapting into their neighbourhood and into their schools. I am very involved locally in the schools and I work 2 part time jobs; both as a children's coordinator in a partnering Anglican church and at McGill daycare. While both jobs are fun and interesting, I also co-lead a junior youth camp annually in August.

Jaisy Tam Harbridge: Hello! My name is Jaisy Tam-Harbridge and I started serving on this WM team with Stacey Lees 3 years ago. I serve as a pastor at Avenue Community Church in Toronto, ON. but am currently on an extended maternity leave. I have 2 daughters named Brooklyn (almost 2 years old) and Taylor (3 months) and we live in the Niagara region with my husband Matt. I moved to this area only 2 years ago and am enjoying building new community and embracing the ministry opportunities that God is opening up for our family!

The last Triennial was in 2016 was and took place in Kansas City in July. Amazingly, our whole team was able to attend and it was also the first opportunity we had to meet together in person. Needless to say, it meant a lot to us to be able to experience life together even for a short few days!

As a follow up, here are some reflections from our time at the last Triennial:

Deb:

This past July I attended my first Triennial. It was truly an exhilarating experience! Among very many highlights over the conference, the brightest for me was definitely the Mini-Sankofa (pre conference experience) I had the privilege to attend. Bonds were quickly formed with other like-minded women as we explored the very difficult issues of racial disharmony that continues in the U.S. Although our situation is different in Canada, we are not exempt from our own racial discords. I came away from this experience saddened that racial issues still exist, yet hopeful for positive change and determined to speak up within my own circle of influence. Another key highlight for me was the opportunity to meet and chat with other women from our Canadian conference (distance makes it difficult to gather), women from other countries (such as Columbia, Mexico, Japan, etc), and missionaries from all over the U.S. I am looking forward to the next Triennial experience in July 2019 and hope to see many of my Canadian sisters there.

Jaisy:

As a first time Triennial attendee, I didn't know what to expect. Needless to say God revealed so much to me and I was so blessed by the experience. When I think about the most memorable and enjoyable moments in my life, somehow they always are the times I have shared with others. At Triennial, one of my fondest memories was when I got to be with my fellow sisters and colleagues of ECCC Women's Ministry. This was our first opportunity to have some face time all together since our new team formed and it was what we needed. It was a new experience for most of us and as we learned more about each other, we started to see glimpses for why God has put us together. We started to dream about what our ministry could be for the women of our denomination. I loved that. I loved hearing the honest thoughts going through everyone's mind and how we were always brought back to listening and discerning with the Lord. Most of all, our hearts seemed to unite for the unity of our body; the Covenant women of Canada and how we can serve and lead them to draw closer to God. We long for more 'face time' opportunities so we can all experience the gift of in-person connection. We thrive in relationship with one another as God ordained it to be a life-giving and refining part of our journeys. I also loved some of the photos we all took together by the photo wall near the end of the conference. Dressing up and being silly became an ice-breaker for many of us from different churches to connect and laugh at and with each other. Sometimes that's actually what is it all about- being present with each other. Being at Triennial was a blessing that surpassed my expectations because God always manages to do that! I truly hope more women of our Canadian churches get to experience this conference and allow for just a few days to soak in God's gifts of Truth, community and best of all, sisterhood.

Diana:

When I reflect on Triennial 2016, I remember laughter. I don't think I've laughed that hard in a long time. I was so thirsty for Christian community when I went and God met me in that. He filled my cup to overflowing! Plus, I was able to connect with other Canadian women, which was definitely the highlight. We laughed and laughed and laughed. Need I say more? So glad to have new friends for the journey!

Stacey:

This was my first year attending Triennial. My time there was like a breath of fresh air for my soul; a time to take a few days away from our busy lives and be with God and some wonderful women. There were many great moments, from amazing worship times and inspiring speakers, to a Kansas City Royals game and the opportunity for our new WM team to finally meet in person. So grateful and thankful to be a part of this amazing conference not only in Canada but also in the U.S., where we can gather and experience God in new ways.

We truly desire to serve the women of our conference and help build into the gifts that God has given us to build His Kingdom. Triennial is one of the many ways in which our denomination is helping us do that and we hope to have more and more sisters attend each year to be with God and with each other.





Trellis Foundation report for the 2017 ECCC AGM

2016 was a significant year for Trellis Foundation. We disbursed two more rounds of grants to Canadian Covenant churches and camps for initiatives to make and deepen disciples of Jesus Christ. We were delighted to support projects like a youth group’s cross-cultural mission trip, a training conference for children’s ministry

volunteers, an event to cultivate reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous Canadians, as well as providing materials for discipleship study groups, scholarships for women to attend Triennial, assisting ministry internships in local churches for developing pastors, and funding a range of discipleship projects through the conference. Thus far a total of \$209,335 has been granted, including 91 CBC Legacy Scholarships since 2009. Visit trellisfoundation.ca/stories to read more about biblical, intentional and innovative discipleship initiatives funded by Trellis.

This October we were amazed by the generosity of God's people during our matching gift opportunity. Your gifts helped us exceed our goal of raising \$25,000 (that would be matched) by 142% – a total of \$60,548 was given in October, including the anonymous \$25,000 matching gift, to catalyze discipleship in the Canadian Covenant! To read about how the Trellis fund is invested, [click here](#).

We were grateful for Paul Lessard giving a week of his time to host Trellis dessert nights in many Covenant churches as a part of our matching gift opportunity. As a former Covenant Bible College professor and president, Paul helped people across the ECCC better understand this new thing that God is up to through Trellis, and appreciate how God is strategically using funds from the college’s closure to continue CBC’s discipleship mission within our local church & camp communities.

Trellis Foundation is excited to offer up to \$10,000 in Camper Scholarship Grants this year, from the funds which were donated in October. Camper Scholarship Grants are available to Canadian Covenant churches who apply to assist children and youth attend any Christian Bible camp, with up to a maximum of \$75 per camper, or a maximum of \$500 per church. [See one page application & details here](#).

Looking ahead, our next grant application deadline is November 1, 2017. Is there a disciple-deepening initiative brewing in your church community? What might Jesus want to do in your community with a Trellis Discipleship Grant? [See application details here](#).

CBC LEGACY BURSARY RECIPIENTS (undergrad)

Darlene Anderson (Winnipeg, MB)	Sustainable Faith School of Spiritual Direction
Megan Doell (Westlock, AB)	Briercrest College and Seminary
Mekenna Dyck (Melfort, SK)	Capenwray Harbour Bible Centre
Micah Friesen (Wetaskiwin, AB)	Canadian Lutheran Bible Institute
Amy Kemerink (Ferintosh, AB)	Prairie Bible College
Sarah MacDonald (Minnedosa, MB)	Providence University College
Ben Mast (Rainy River, ON)	Moody Bible Institute

STAY CONNECTED!

Sign up for the Weekly Prayer E-mail!

Each week a prayer e-mail is sent with news from our churches and our conference. To sign up, send an email to office@covchurch.ca and we will add you to the list!

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www.facebook.com/covchurchCanada

Visit our website!

As always, our website is a great resources to everyone. Check-in to stay on top of the most recent events and happenings of the ECCC denomination.

www.covchurch.ca



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